

Poetry Porch: Poetry

Blood Roses

By Nancy Cherico

Best not to mention to friends
that our father brought home bottles
of expired blood from the lab.
He compounded it with coffee grounds,
manure, and white fertilizer from a bag
—an elixir to coax from red Georgia clay
magnificent hybrid tea roses:
Peace, Mr. Lincoln, Eternal Flame.
He got up before the rest of us
in the sticky summer dawn
to clip the choicest buds and blossoms
still graced with dew,
present them to our mother,
and place them in the center
of the table set for breakfast.
Mother, for her part,
would have preferred his love.